



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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## HB 196 RELATING TO SHORELINES AND BEACH CLEANUP

Statement for  
House Committee on  
Ocean and Marine Resources  
Public Hearing - February 6, 1991

By  
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center  
Ray Tabata, Sea Grant

HB 196 would shift responsibility for removing and cleaning of beaches from the various counties to the State.

Our statement on this bill does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The rationale for the proposed transfer of responsibility for beach clean-up is not indicated in HB 196 and we have no particular reasons for recommending one organizational structure over another. We do offer, however, two issues for your consideration.

The first involves the timeliness with which a prompt response to an unsafe condition can be effected. Several years ago an unfortunate accident occurred on a beach on Oahu caused by a large log rolling around in the surf. It is important that the agency or department that has responsibility for cleaning the beaches can respond immediately to any such threats to public safety. Similarly, if debris piles up and rots posing a public health or nuisance factor, prompt action will be needed. It would seem that the counties would be better informed of their local conditions and beach needs and thus better able to provide a timely response than a state agency operating out of Oahu.

Second, in any beach cleaning effort it should also be recognized that the organic debris left behind by the wash of the waves provides nutrients, food and habitat to other beach creatures. The debris is an ecosystem onto itself. Hence, total clean-up and pristine maintenance of all beaches should not be the goal.